

concerning the Hudson application which, more recently, he conceded were “hyperbole” or “overstatements.” *See* discussion of Grand Jury at Section II.K.7., *infra*.

Babbitt’s testimony before the House Committee on the issues associated with the July 14 Eckstein meeting was generally consistent with his Senate Committee testimony. Babbitt told the House Committee that he had “made up” the Ickes remark as “an excuse in an effort to end the meeting” with Eckstein.⁶⁸⁰ He recalled the specific statement as follows:

To the best of my recollection, I said that Harold Ickes wanted or expected the Department to make a decision promptly.⁶⁸¹

This is the same formulation that Babbitt used in his written statement to the Senate Committee, including the use of the word “promptly.” Babbitt was not pressed in the House hearing, however, as he was in the Senate, to reconcile his choice of “promptly” with his distinct recollection that he did not say “today” or “without delay.”

Babbitt told the House Committee that he invoked Ickes “[s]imply because Harold Ickes was my liaison on these kinds of Interior matters at the White House.”⁶⁸² He also said he should have declined the meeting with Eckstein, calling it “the first time in the course of this whole thing that I had met with any advocate or lobbyist of any kind, first time.”⁶⁸³

⁶⁸⁰*Id.*

⁶⁸¹*Id.*

⁶⁸²Babbitt House Test. at 798.

⁶⁸³*Id.* at 841. He indicated that the applicant lobbyists had engaged in “questionable behavior,” *id.* at 772, and that they “tried to misuse personal access” to him. *Id.* at 778. He dismissed their accusations of official misconduct as a “half baked theory of improper political influence and intrigue” and “a conspiracy theory worthy of Oliver Stone.” *Id.* at 769. In the Grand Jury, when asked to explain what he meant when he said the applicant lobbyists “tried to
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